

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 have been examined. Applicant has canceled claims 1-10 and 12-15 without prejudice or disclaimer, and has added new claim 16.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for courtesies extended during the telephone interview of June 13, 2006 and the personal interview of June 27, 2006. A copy of the Statement of Substance of Interview is enclosed herewith.

§101 Rejections

Claims 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the claimed invention is allegedly directed to non-statutory subject matter. Since such claims have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, the rejection of these claims is moot.

§ 112 Rejections

Claims 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. As discussed during the interview, Applicant has amended claim 11 along the lines suggested by the Examiner. This rejection of claim 11 is believed to be overcome by these amendments. Also, since claim 12 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, the rejection of this claim is moot.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1-4, 6-10 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shima et al. (EP 0782067 A2) in view of McDonald et al. (6,560,627). Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shima et al. (EP 0782067 A2) in view of McDonald et al. (6,560,627), and further in view of Zimmerman (5,490,237). Claims 12 and 13

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln. No. 09/522,407

are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shima et al. (EP 0782067 A2) in view of Welland et al. (5,247,677). Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shima et al. (EP 0782067 A2) in view of McDonald et al. (6,560,627) and further in view of Welland et al. (5,247,677).

With respect to claims 1-10 and 12-15, Applicant has canceled these claims without prejudice or disclaimer and submits that the rejections of these claims is moot.

Also, during the June 27 interview, the Examiner indicated that amended claim 11 is patentable over the prior art.

Newly Added Claims

Applicant has added new claim 16. Since claim 16 contains features that are similar to the features recited in claim 11, Applicant submits that claim 16 is patentable for similar reasons.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln. No. 09/522,407

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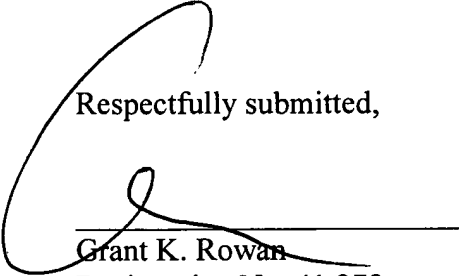
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Respectfully submitted,



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